

Optimizing Da'wah Management in Multicultural Contexts: Lessons from PCNU Pematang Siantar North Sumatra, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the da'wah management practices employed by the Pematang Siantar Nahdlatul Ulama Branch Management (PCNU) in promoting multicultural da'wah programs within a community characterized by ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. The research utilizes a qualitative approach and adopts descriptive methods. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The analysis of the data involved identifying emerging key themes and utilizing triangulation to ensure the accuracy and validity of the findings. The primary informant in this study was the chairman of the Pematang Siantar PCNU. The results indicate that PCNU Pematang Siantar has effectively implemented adaptive da'wah management practices that address cultural and religious diversity in the region. This success can be attributed to meticulous planning, structured organization, effective leadership, continuous supervision, and periodic evaluation, as well as the adjustment of da'wah methods to suit specific contexts. This research recommends the da'wah management model utilized by PCNU Pematang Siantar as a noteworthy example for other religious organizations facing the challenges of da'wah in a pluralistic society.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis manajemen dakwah yang diterapkan oleh Pengurus Cabang Nahdlatul Ulama (PCNU) Pematang Siantar dalam menyukseskan program dakwah multikultural di tengah masyarakat yang majemuk secara etnis, budaya, dan agama. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan dengan mengidentifikasi tema-tema utama yang muncul dari data yang dikumpulkan, serta menerapkan triangulasi untuk memastikan akurasi dan validitas informasi yang diperoleh. Informan utama dalam penelitian ini adalah ketua PCNU Pematang Siantar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan PCNU Pematang Siantar telah berhasil menerapkan manajemen dakwah yang efektif dan adaptif terhadap keragaman budaya dan agama di Pematang Siantar. Keberhasilan ini dicapai melalui perencanaan yang matang, pengorganisasian yang terstruktur, pengarahan yang efektif, pengawasan yang berkelanjutan, dan evaluasi yang periodik, serta penyesuaian metode dakwah sesuai konteks. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan model manajemen dakwah PCNU Pematang Siantar sebagai contoh bagi organisasi keagamaan lain dalam menghadapi tantangan dakwah di tengah masyarakat pluralistik.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Management involves directing efforts that are crucial for the success or failure of activities aimed at achieving specific goals through collaboration with others. It encompasses the processes of planning, organizing, leading, supervising, and controlling each member of the organization while utilizing resources effectively to reach established objectives.¹ In general, da'wah can be understood as the science of inviting others to embrace goodness within the context of religion. Therefore, we can define da'wah management as a discipline focused on the planning processes involved in promoting goodness. This includes various creative methods tailored to the needs of the audience (*mad'u*) and the capabilities of the preacher (*dā'i*) to ensure the effectiveness of their da'wah. The methods for this are guided primarily by the teachings in the Qur'an, specifically referenced in Surah Al-Naḥl, verse 125, Which the meaning "*Invite people to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and engage in discussions with them in a respectful manner. Truly, it is your Lord who knows best those who stray from His path, and He knows best who is guided.*"

In this verse, Allah offers important guidance to His Messenger on how to invite people (da'wah) to the path of Allah. The "way of Allah" refers to the religion revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, specifically the Islamic law. By establishing the foundations of da'wah, Allah equips His followers with the principles necessary for effectively conveying the message in the future.²

First and foremost, Allah clarifies that this da'wah is centered on the religion of Allah and is intended to seek His pleasure, rather than to serve the personal interests of the preacher or a specific group. The Messenger is encouraged to focus his efforts on guiding people to the way of Allah and the teachings of Islam alone, thus promoting a sincere and genuine invitation to faith.³

Second, Allah instructed the Prophet to preach with wisdom. Wisdom can be understood in several ways: (a) It involves gaining insight into the secrets and benefits of all things, leading to credible beliefs. (b) It entails using accurate and precise language that serves as compelling arguments to distinguish between what is right and what is false, or potentially dubious. (c) It encompasses knowledge of the laws of the Qur'an, comprehension of the Qur'an itself, a deep understanding of religion, reverence for Allah, and the articulation of correct words and actions. The meaning of wisdom that most closely aligns with the truth is the first definition: the understanding of the secrets and benefits of something—knowledge that offers genuine advantages. Preaching with wisdom means imparting knowledge about the secrets, benefits, and purposes of divine revelation in a way that is contextual and accessible, allowing for easy comprehension by the audience.⁴

Allah instructed the Prophet that the call to da'wah should be carried out with kindness, gentleness, and soothing teachings in order to be better received. Teaching and recitation

¹ Khairan Muhammad Arif, Ahmad Luthfi, Ahmad Suja'i, "Urgensi Manajemen Dalam Dakwah," *Tahdzib Al-Akhlaq: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2022): 37–50, <https://doi.org/10.34005/tahdzib.v5i1.1950>.

² Yunita Ratna Sari, "Pemanfaatan E- Dakwah Sebagai Media Pengarusutamaan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Situasi Pandemi Covid 19," *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 7, no. 2 (2022): 95, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jdk.v7i2.5765>.

³ Wibowo Ari, "Digitalisasi Dakwah Di Media Sosial Berbasis Desain Komunikasi Visual," *Jurnal Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam* 02, no. 2 (2020): 181–12.

⁴ Siti Nurul Yaqinah, Daeng Sani Ferdiansyah, and Andri Kurniawan, "Da'wah and Culture: Islamic Value in Sorong Serah Aji Krama in Padamara Village, East Lombok," *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.15575/idajhs.v15i1.12556>.

should not always evoke anxiety or fear in people's hearts. Those who commit sins due to ignorance or foolishness should not have their wrongdoings publicly exposed in a manner that hurts them. A sermon or recitation delivered with gentle language can effectively soften hardened hearts and brings more peace compared to those that contain threats and harsh curses. However, issuing warnings and threats is permissible when the situation calls for it. To maintain engagement during recitations, the Prophet (peace be upon him) skillfully integrated uplifting content with materials that instilled fear. This approach prevented monotony and ensured that the recitations included not only commands and prohibitions but also content that encouraged obedience and inspired the heart.⁵

Fourth, Allah explains that when engaging in a discussion with polytheists or people of the Book, the Messenger should argue with them in a respectful manner. An example of a constructive debate is the one between Prophet Ibrahim and his people, where he invited them to reflect on their own mistakes in order to discover the truth. It is unhelpful to provoke an opponent with harsh words, as this creates a tense atmosphere. Instead, it is better to foster a comfortable and relaxed environment, which allows for a productive search for truth. A good debate should also inhibit negative human traits such as arrogance, pride, and the need to save face, as these qualities are highly undesirable. The person being debated should be approached in a way that respects their dignity, while the speaker emphasizes that the primary objective is to uncover the truth in the name of Allah.⁶

Fifth, the ultimate goal of all efforts and struggles is to have faith in Allah. It is only He who instills faith in the human soul, rather than other people or even the preacher. Allah, the Lord, knows best which of His servants are unable to preserve their faith in the face of misleading influences and may become misguided. Conversely, He also knows which servants are able to maintain their faith and are receptive to guidance from Him.⁷

From the verses and interpretations mentioned, Allah has outlined the method of da'wah, which is inviting others to the path of Allah. This invitation should be made in a respectful manner, and any debates should be conducted with kindness and integrity. A good debate avoids fostering negative human traits such as arrogance, pride, and self-serving behavior, which are strongly condemned. When addressing an opponent, it is essential to show respect for their dignity, ensuring that the primary aim is to seek the truth in the religion of Allah. Moreover, effective da'wah management plays a crucial role in building a successful outreach, especially when associated with an agency, organization, or company. The author is interested in one particular Islamic organization: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), which is one of the largest in Indonesia. NU has a storied history spanning over a century, demonstrating its strong and well-organized missionary management that has allowed it to thrive to this day. This organization has numerous branches throughout Indonesia, each with its own unique management structure tailored to meet the needs, potentials, and successes of its respective

⁵ Roni Tabroni and Idham, "From Radical Labels to Moderate Islam: The Transformation of the Salafism Movement in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 13, no. 2 (2023): 279–306, <https://doi.org/10.18326/IJIMS.V13I2.279-306>.

⁶ B Baidawi, A Rozak, and ..., "Humanisme Islam, Media Instagram Syubbanul Muslimin, Dan Edukasi Islami," *Journal of Islamic ...* 1, no. November 2022 (2023): 1–25.

⁷ NU Online, "Al-Qur'an Online," NU Online, n.d.

region. In this context, the author's focus is on one of the NU branches located in North Sumatra Province, specifically in the city of Pematang Siantar.⁸

The city of Pematang Siantar is an area that contains many tribes and religions, resulting in various customs and beliefs, or simply we call it a multicultural society. With the existence of this multicultural society, of course this is an extraordinary challenge for a *dā'i* in carrying out his da'wah.⁹ Then, in this case it does not hinder the PCNU Pematang Siantar in spreading its da'wah among the people, proven by the continued existence and consistency of the PCNU Pematang Siantar which is still present in the community to this day. This shows that the da'wah management carried out and adopted by PCNU Pematang Siantar is a da'wah management that has been arranged in such a complex way that da'wah continues to develop even in a multicultural society. In this case, the author is very interested in the formulation of da'wah management by PCNU Pematang Siantar in making multicultural da'wah a success.

There are several studies that are relevant to this article. the research titled "LDK-PAB Preaching Strategy for Enhancing Religious Understanding in the Community of Pematang Siantar City." It emphasizes how to improve the religious understanding of the community in Pematang Siantar. While previous studies have also addressed preaching strategies in community settings, they have not specifically concentrated on the indicators that measure these preaching efforts. The findings indicate that the research successfully enhanced the religious understanding of the community through three main strategies: strengthening religious literacy, fostering personal and community engagement, and utilizing digital technology.¹⁰

The research titled "Multiculturalism Reasoning by Dr. (HC) KH. Ahmad Mustofa Bisri and Its Implications for Islamic Da'wah in the Archipelago" highlights the significance of multiculturalism in da'wah as a means of spiritual development and as a foundation for cultivating noble morals. Both studies focus on Islamic moral values within the context of da'wah; however, they differ in that the principles of da'wah management are not explicitly applied.¹¹

This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation and formulation of da'wah management by PCNU Pematang Siantar, focusing on making multicultural da'wah successful. Additionally, the study seeks to identify both the obstacles and supporting factors in the execution of da'wah strategies. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the literature on da'wah management and multicultural da'wah, particularly within Islamic mass organizations. Practically, the findings can serve as a strategic reference for the management of PCNU Pematang Siantar and for Islamic mass organizations in general, as they develop effective and well-measured da'wah approaches. Furthermore, the results are anticipated to provide a policy reference for organizations and government agencies in formulating multicultural da'wah models that are relevant to contemporary needs. The scope of this study focuses on the various functions of da'wah management, including planning, organizing,

⁸ M Dimyati Huda, "The Variation of Javanese Islamic Society in the Existence of Paranormal," *Journal of Development Research* 1, no. 2 (November 1, 2017): 45–54, <https://doi.org/10.28926/JDR.V1I2.20>.

⁹ M Ramdhan, "Metode Dakwah Masyarakat Multikultur," *Jurnal JMDIK (Manajemen Dakwah Dan Ilmu Komunikas* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1–245.

¹⁰ Almasdan & Mailin, (2024)

¹¹ Shofi Muhyiddin, (2023)

implementing, supervising, and evaluating, as well as models of multicultural da'wah.¹² The research is conducted at the Central Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Pematang Siantar. It deliberately excludes other general management aspects such as finances or administration to maintain a strong focus on the success of multicultural da'wah through a managerial approach. It is hoped that this research will reveal a new paradigm regarding how students can transform social media from mere entertainment into a more effective platform for preaching and learning. By prioritizing Islamic principles in digital literacy, students are expected to use social media more responsibly and productively in both their academic and spiritual lives.

B. METHODS

To gain insight into the management of multicultural da'wah efforts by the PCNU Pematang Siantar, this study adopted a qualitative approach with a field research design.¹³ This descriptive method aims to elucidate the status of the subjects or objects of study based on actual facts.¹⁴ The participants included the administrators and members of the PCNU Pematang Siantar who are actively involved in the da'wah programs. The researcher effectively utilized both primary and selective data sources. Primary data was collected directly from the research subjects through interviews and observations, while secondary data included books, journals, and relevant prior research, which complemented the existing literature reviews. Data collection techniques included direct observation of da'wah and intelligence activities at PCNU Pematang Siantar, in-depth interviews with the administrators of PCNU Pematang Siantar, and the collection of various documents that served as research data sources. Secondary data were gathered from a variety of sources, including books, journals, intelligence reports, and printed media compiled by other parties. In contrast, primary data were obtained directly from intelligence related to the research subjects. Data analysis techniques in qualitative research were conducted throughout the data collection process and continued after data collection was complete. During the interviews, the researcher analyzed the informants' responses in real time.¹⁵ Data collection techniques, including direct observation, respondent interviews, and document collection, provide various sources of research data. Secondary data is gathered from sources like books, articles, and other printed materials that have been compiled by others. In contrast, primary data is obtained directly from the original source through interactions with the research subjects.¹⁶

This study utilized a qualitative approach for data analysis, aiming to draw valid conclusions about the phenomena and subjects investigated at the NU Central Executive Board (PCNU) in Pematang Siantar. The analysis involved identifying key issues that emerged from the collected data and applying triangulation to ensure the accuracy and validity of the findings. Preaching activities within the community and through mass media have generally

¹² Muhammad Misbah and Jubaedah Jubaedah, "Fanatisme Dalam Praktik Pendidikan Islam," *INSANIA: Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 26, no. 1 (2021): 51–64, <https://doi.org/10.24090/insania.v26i1.4825>.

¹³ (Karimah, 2025)

¹⁴ John W Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed-Method Approaches* (London: SAGE Publications Inc, 2014).

¹⁵ (Helrlindawati, 2022)

¹⁶ Fardika Yusuf and Nashrillah MG, "Strategi Dakwah Pengasuh Dalam Membina Akhlakul Karimah Anak-Anak Panti Asuhan Mamiyai Al-Ittihadiyah Medan," *Qulubana: Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 5, no. 1 (2024): 157–73, <https://doi.org/10.54396/qlb.v5i1.1240>.

been responsive to the realities of modern society and its diverse population. Efforts have been made to ensure that the religious messages conveyed are well-received. Various methods are typically employed in these preaching activities. However, a significant question remains: Has the content of the preaching been adapted to reflect the region, its diverse population, and the attitudes of its members toward the community's cultural differences? Additionally, has a multicultural preaching policy been effectively developed?¹⁷ As resource persons or actors, preachers must possess the ability to blend this diversity, taking into account the content or messages conveyed, the delivery method, the resource person or preacher involved, and the media used. Da'wah is a process of transforming Islamic values into society; therefore, da'wah will never cease to interact with the culture of that society itself. There is a concept of da'wah that prioritizes sympathetic, wise, and more humanistic methods.¹⁸ As a source or actor, a preacher must be able to understand diversity by considering the content or message being conveyed, the method of delivery, the role of the preacher or source, and the media used. Da'wah is the process of instilling Islamic values into society; therefore, da'wah is always connected to the culture of the community. Da'wah focuses on a more sympathetic, wise, and humanistic approach. This ensures that the Islamic values conveyed are well-received by the wider community

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Profile of PCNU Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra, Indonesia

In 1968, when H. Muhammad Nuh Nasution arrived in Pematang Siantar and joined PMII (Indonesian Islamic Student Movement), NU in the city already had a strong influence. Evidence of this is the presence of four DPRD members from the NU Party: the late Idris Basir Saragih, the late Kaman Sinaga, the late Rusli Pulungan, and another whose name is not mentioned in the document. In addition, there was a representative of the ulama who was also an NU cadre, the late H. Zubeir Harahap. NU at that time had assets and a high bargaining position in Pematang Siantar, active in social activities, and kept alive NU traditions.¹⁹

Four Islamic parties, including Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), merged to form the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan 'United Development Party' (PPP). In Pematang Siantar, the PPP was led by the late Muhammad Kamal from the NU Party, as NU had the largest number of DPRD members among the merged parties. Despite the political merger, NU's non-political activities continued.

After the 1984 Situbondo Congress, NU decided to return to its 1926 principles, freeing itself from political party ties and allowing its cadres to join any political party. Following this, NU in Pematang Siantar was led by the late Rahman Saragih and Drs. Juneld Parinduri as the Chairman of the Syuriah Council. Some of the results of the NU Pematang Siantar Regional Conference since the 1990s: 1. Regional Conference III: The late Ali Umar Hutabarat (Chairman), M. Nuh Matondang (Secretary), Drs. Khairuddin Nasution (Department of the Deputy Chairman of the Syuriah Council). 2. Regional Conference IV: Drs. H. Muhammad Nuh Nasution, M.Pd (Chairman), The late Drs. H. Porang Harahap (Secretary), H. Abdul Halim

¹⁷ M.Ag Dr. H. Sudirman. S.Ag, *Manajemen Dakwah* (Jakarta: Puliuca Indonesia Utama, 2025).

¹⁸ Dr. H. Sudirman. S.Ag.

¹⁹ Robin Bush and Greg Fealy, "The Political Decline of Traditional Ulama in Indonesia: The State, Umma and Nahdlatul Ulama," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 42, no. 5 (January 1, 2014): 536–60, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685314-04205004>.

Lubis, MM (Department of the Syuriah Council). 3. Regional Conference V: Drs. Dahmanur (Chairman), Yusri Batubara, MM (Secretary), Drs. Khairuddin Nasution (Department of the Syuriah Council). 4. Regional Conference VI: Drs. H. Mustafa Kamal Siregar (Chairman), Rustam Asari Ritonga (Secretary), Drs. H. Syarwan (Department of the Syuriah Council). 5. VIIth Regional Conference (2018): H. Maranaik Hasibuan, MA was elected as the Tanfidziyah Chairman for the 2018-2023 period, defeating Armansyah S.Pd.I was with a difference of 2 votes (5 votes vs. 3 votes). Drs H. Muhammad Nuh Nasution, M.Pd, was elected as the Chairman of Rois Syuriah. H. Maranaik Hasibuan launched the "6 Punya" program for his leadership period.

Historical records indicate that Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was founded by Islamic scholars and students from Islamic boarding schools prior to its official establishment in Surabaya in 1926. In 1961, during the nation's early awakening known as Nahdlatul Wathon, the Islamic scholars and students became central figures in the struggle for the unity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, especially while the country was under colonial rule. During this period, they shifted their focus from serving limited Islamic groups to promoting a more universal agenda aimed at national awakening and the fight against colonialism. Nahdlatul Wathon played a significant role in various independence movements, which later led to the establishment of Nahdlatut Tujjar (the Awakening of Traders). This initiative was aimed at empowering the economic independence of the community and enabling them to compete with, and ultimately mitigate, the economic influence of the colonialists.²⁰

2. Management of PCNU Pematang Siantar's Da'wah in Making Multicultural Da'wah

Management is a series of processes that include planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and evaluating activities in an organization, as well as utilizing all available resources to achieve predetermined goals. According to A. Rosyad Shaleh, da'wah management is defined as a process of planning tasks, grouping tasks, gathering and placing implementing personnel in task groups and then mobilizing towards achieving da'wah goals. Therefore, in order to realize successful multicultural da'wah, a well-structured and appropriate management system is needed, so that it is able to support the achievement of accurate, effective and efficient da'wah goals in accordance with the needs of multicultural da'wah. In various da'wah management theories, there are management functions that are very important and basic in implementing more effective and efficient da'wah management and in accordance with the goals and needs of the times.²¹

Furthermore, in an effort to ensure the success of multicultural da'wah, the PCNU Pematang Siantar has systematically implemented da'wah management functions. This implementation aims to ensure that every da'wah activity runs effectively, efficiently, and has a positive impact on multicultural society. According to George R. Terry, the following da'wah management functions are (POAC): Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling.²²

²⁰ Miftahul Ulum and abd. Wahid HS, "Klasifikasi Ilmu Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Al-Insiyroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 5, no. 2 (2019): 54-75.

²¹ Mick Will, "Chapter 1 - Purpose and Introduction," ed. Mick B T - An Operations Guide to Safety and Environmental Management Systems (SEMS) Will (Gulf Professional Publishing, 2020), 1-4, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-820040-7.00001-6>.

²² A Siregar, *Manajemen Pembinaan Akhlak Pada Santri MTS-M 09.Dahlan Sipirok*, 2021.

a. Planning Function

Planning can be defined as a process of preparing decision-making tools for future actions. Effective organizational planning ensures that missionary activities are both directed and impactful, addressing current social challenges and needs. Additionally, planning optimizes the use of available resources, including human resources, time, and materials, allowing for more efficient implementation and a positive impact. In this context, it is crucial to consider the psychological and social conditions of the community to ensure the missionary message is well-received. The planning function within PCNU Pematang Siantar is a vital initial step in determining the direction of relevant da'wah. This process involves defining the da'wah material, the *dā'i* (the deliverer of the da'wah), and the *mad'u* (the recipient of the da'wah messages), which continue to evolve over time. Planning is carried out by establishing specific goals for da'wah, such as cultivating noble morals, increasing understanding of Islamic teachings, and fostering a strong religious identity.²³ These goals serve as a concrete foundation for developing relevant and measurable activities. The management of PCNU Pematang Siantar plays a significant role in organizing various programs for preaching and moral improvement in a structured manner. This includes initiatives such as weekly discussions, regular study sessions, and the implementation of PKPNU (Nahdatul Ulama Cadre Education).

b. Organizing Function

This is a vital management function for the success of the multicultural da'wah program of the PCNU Pematang Siantar. This function ensures that human, financial, and material resources are allocated effectively and efficiently to achieve the goals of inclusive da'wah and respect for diversity.²⁴

The organizational role in multicultural da'wah encompasses several crucial aspects, such as: 1) An organizational structure, which, according to the PCNU Pematang Siantar, needs to be clear, defined, and appropriate to the needs of multicultural da'wah. This structure must be able to accommodate various divisions or teams focused on diverse community groups, such as ethnic groups, religions, or age groups. 2) A clear division of tasks and responsibilities will prevent overlap and ensure each member has a specific and measurable role. This is crucial for the efficient and effective implementation of the da'wah program. 3) Effective and efficient management of resources, including space, facilities, and information technology, to support da'wah activities, and 4) Coordination and collaboration between divisions or teams are crucial to ensuring harmony and synergy in the implementation of the da'wah program. In the context of the organization of the PCNU Pematang Siantar, there is a uniqueness, especially in the organizational structure section which consists of 4 main parts, namely, first, *mustasyar*, is an advisor who is tasked with providing advice to NU administrators according to their level. Second, *syuriyah*, is the highest leader in the PCNU whose task is to foster, control, supervise, and determine NU policies according to their level. Third, *a'wan syuriyah*, has an important role in supporting and implementing policies determined by the *syuriyah*.

²³ Zohreh Fanni, "Cities and Urbanization in Iran after the Islamic Revolution," *Cities* 23, no. 6 (2006): 407–11, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2006.08.003>.

²⁴ Rena Latifa et al., "The Intention of Becoming Religiously Moderate in Indonesian Muslims: Do Knowledge and Attitude Interfere?," *Religions*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060540>.

Fourth, Tanfidziyah, is responsible for implementing work programs and leading the running of the organization, as well as submitting reports periodically to the Syuriyah management.

c. Directive or Actuating Function

This function serves as a management tool that translates the group's plans and directives into concrete actions. In the context of the PCNU Pematang Siantar's da'wah management aimed at the success of multicultural da'wah, effectively directing programs is crucial to ensure that they run smoothly and achieve their targets. For instance, implementation focuses on carrying out the planned da'wah activities. This includes assigning tasks to members, procuring resources, and monitoring the implementation of programs in the field. The direction function within PCNU Pematang Siantar is executed through various structured and engaging da'wah activities, such as congregational prayers, Al-Qur'an recitation, religious studies, and more. What makes this approach particularly interesting is how the administrators and mentors organize da'wah activities in a fun and relevant way, incorporating Islamic seminars, motivational talks, and intellectual discussions on Islamic morals and values. The direction provided by PCNU Pematang Siantar extends beyond mere instructions. It includes personal motivation and exemplary behavior from the mentors, creating an environment that fosters the development of moral values. Administrators and mentors are not merely schedulers; they also serve as role models who influence behavior through their actions. Members and the multicultural community are gradually guided to appreciate the importance of virtues such as honesty, responsibility, mutual respect, and caring for others. This awareness does not arise suddenly but develops from consistent and heartfelt guidance. In conclusion, the guidance function within PCNU Pematang Siantar is a crucial pillar in shaping the character and morals of its members and the multicultural community. Through heartfelt and motivating guidance packaged in engaging activities, the moral development process becomes vibrant and meaningful. Members and the community do not simply engage in routines; instead, they are nurtured toward embodying religious, polite, honest, and compassionate qualities—reflecting the noble morals that are the primary goal of da'wah.²⁵

d. Controlling Function

Supervision is an essential management function that ensures da'wah activities are conducted as planned and meet their established goals. In the context of the multicultural da'wah program of the PCNU Pematang Siantar, effective supervision is vital for maintaining the quality and effectiveness of the program, as well as ensuring its sustainability. For instance, monitoring the implementation of the da'wah program involves evaluating completed activities, assessing the achievement of targets, and identifying any obstacles encountered. This monitoring should be carried out periodically and systematically, utilizing appropriate methods such as written reports, field visits, and interviews with members of the community.

²⁵ Sofyan Sauri, Sandie Gunara, and Febbry Cipta, "Establishing the Identity of Insan Kamil Generation through Music Learning Activities in Pesantren," *Heliyon* 8, no. 7 (2022): e09958, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09958>.

e. Evaluation Function

An essential component of the monitoring process is evaluation. Evaluation is conducted to assess the extent to which the objectives of successful multicultural da'wah have been achieved and any obstacles encountered during implementation. Through evaluation, the PCNU Pematang Siantar can measure the development of multicultural da'wah, for example, in terms of tolerance between religious communities and mutual assistance and sympathy.

This evaluation can be conducted through observation of the behavior of the multicultural community and through discussions with community members and government officials in the city of Pematang Siantar. The evaluation results serve not only as administrative records but also as a basis for developing strategies for improvement and innovation of the eighth-grade multicultural da'wah program. Regarding input, both supervision and evaluation are crucial in assessing the effectiveness of the resources received by the orphanage. Assistance in the form of preaching materials, spiritual activities, or volunteer support must be monitored to ensure it is not wasted. Evaluation helps assess whether the input has had a tangible impact on the child's character development, or whether new models need to be developed for more optimal results. At the NU Pematang Siantar chapter, supervision and evaluation must not be rigid or oppressive, but rather conducted in a humanistic, educational, and nurturing manner so that members of the NU Pematang Siantar chapter and the multicultural community continue to feel valued and supported with compassion. When supervision is carried out wisely and evaluation is carried out objectively, then increasing good morals does not only become a routine activity, but a process of personality transformation that continues to develop.

3. Methods for Making Multicultural Preaching at the PCNU Pematang Siantar

a. Preaching Methods in Accordance with Guidance

In the implementation of da'wah, the model is a crucial element that determines the success or failure of the da'wah work. Incorrect use of the model can lead to misunderstandings and distract the audience from the goal of da'wah. Using a model that is appropriate to the level of thinking and condition of the community or congregation will help facilitate the da'wah process. A *dā'i* can use three models when delivering da'wah, namely those in Surah An-Nahl verse 125.²⁶

In his interpretation of Al Misbah, Quraish Shihab discusses a verse that many scholars understand as outlining three types of preaching methods that should be tailored to the target audience of da'wah (Islamic invitation). Scholars with advanced knowledge are advised to preach with wisdom, engaging in dialogues using thoughtful language that aligns with the audience's level of understanding. For the general public, the approach recommended is *mau'izhah*, which involves offering advice and parables that resonate with their simpler level of knowledge. When addressing the People of the Book and followers of other religions, the command is to engage in *jidal* (debate) in the best manner possible, utilizing logic and gentle rhetoric, and refraining from violence and insults. Research conducted by the PCNU Pematang Siantar highlights that their da'wah methods adhere to Islamic principles. They emphasize promoting good deeds and discouraging wrongdoing, all while maintaining proper etiquette

²⁶ Siti Hotiza, "Interpretasi Metode Dakwah Dalam Al-Qur'an Surah an-Nahl Ayat 125," *Gunung Djati Conference Series* 8 (2022): 137-47.

and kindness in their preaching. Additionally, the PCNU Pematang Siantar incorporates local culture into their da'wah activities. Every region has its unique customs and traditions; therefore, for Islamic preaching to be well-received by the Muslim community, it must integrate these cultural values.

1) *Bi al-Hikmah* Method

Da'wah *Bi al-Hikmah* is a concept in Islamic teachings that emphasizes the importance of conveying the message of Islam with wisdom and good morals. The term "wisdom" itself can be translated as wisdom, intelligence, or prudence. So, da'wah *Bi al-Hikmah* means conveying the message of Islam wisely and intelligently. The aim of da'wah *Bi al-Hikmah* is not merely to convey information about Islam but also to encourage people to understand, accept and practice Islam as a guide to life. Therefore, the strategy of da'wah *Bi al-Hikmah* includes the use of effective communication, empathy, and understanding the needs and background of the audience. The approach of da'wah *Bi al-Hikmah* also emphasizes the importance of building relationships and connections with the audience to create trust and intelligence. In essence, da'wah *bi-hikmah* is a call to convey the message of Islam in a manner that is as selective and as effective as possible while still embodying the values of wisdom, compassion, and empathy.²⁷

In carrying out da'wah (Islamic outreach), the PCNU Pematang Siantar must prioritize wisdom and discernment. Furthermore, PCNU preachers are required to be role models for the community. Before preaching to the community, it is crucial to preach to the community themselves. Therefore, PCNU preachers must demonstrate leadership for the community in their da'wah.

2) *The Mau'idah Hasanah* Method

Mau'idah Hasanah refers to giving advice and reminders to others using kind language that touches their hearts, making them more receptive to the guidance offered. It can be understood as expressions that carry elements of guidance, education, teaching, storytelling, uplifting news, warnings, and positive messages that serve as life guidelines aimed at achieving salvation in this world and the hereafter. For *Mau'idah Hasanah* to truly resonate with individuals, the words must be accompanied by the actions and exemplary behavior of the person conveying the message. This alignment between speech and action is what makes it '*hasanah*'—goodness. In contrast, a message lacking this alignment can have a negative impact and should be avoided. Moreover, *Mau'idah* typically aims to deter individuals from engaging in bad behavior, which can evoke positive emotions in both the giver and the receiver. Consequently, it is essential to use *Mau'idah Hasanah* to remind others of the importance of goodness. This form of advice conveys messages that reach the heart with genuine warmth and tenderness, steering clear of exposing or distorting the mistakes of others. Gentle guidance can often soften a hardened heart and calm a restless spirit, making it easier to inspire goodness rather than relying on prohibitions and threats.²⁸

²⁷ Nove Kurniati Sari and Dian Arif Noor Pratama, "Strategi Dakwah Bil-Hikmah Oleh Kyai Di Pesantren Hurrasul Aqidah Tarakan," *Borneo Journal of Islamic Education* 3, no. 1 (2023): 1–17.

²⁸ Ahmed Al Khalidi, "Penerapan Metode Dakwah Mauidzah Al-Hasanah Terhadap Pembinaan Remaja Gampong Uteun Geulinggang Kecamatan Dewantara Kabupaten Aceh Utara," *Jurnal An-Nasyr: Jurnal Dakwah Dalam Mata Tinta* 8, no. 2 (2021): 123–34, <https://doi.org/10.54621/jn.v8i2.128>.

Based on the research results, it is clear that PCNU has been carrying out *Mau'idah Hasanah* da'wah. PCNU Pematang Siantar always carries out da'wah by providing advice to the community, especially on important Islamic holidays. PCNU Pematang Siantar always holds religious studies and provides spiritual guidance to the community.

3) *Mujādalāh* Method

From an etymological perspective, the word */mujādalāh/* originates from the term */jadala/*, which means to twist or coil. "*Jadala*" can also refer to the act of pulling on a rope or tying it to strengthen something. A debater, therefore, resembles someone who pulls with words to persuade their opponent by reinforcing their own opinions through the arguments they present. *Mujādalāh* is a technique or effort aimed at guiding people toward the right path, as the ultimate goal of da'wah (invitation) is to promote mercy for all, or "*rahmatan lil ālamīn*." This ensures safety in both this world and the hereafter. The exchange of opinions (discussion) conducted synergistically by both parties aims to persuade the listener to accept the argument presented, supported by sound reasoning and robust evidence. Throughout this process, it is essential to uphold ethical standards and politeness, avoiding any hostility.²⁹

The above statement can be concluded that the *mujadalāh* model is an exchange of opinions between two groups that occurs synergistically and does not create hostility towards the target of the discussion. They can accept opinions presented with strong arguments and evidence. In terms of *mujadalāh* da'wah, the PCNU often exchanges ideas with those with differing opinions, not to seek victory or defeat, but to foster mutual understanding. Like NU and Muhammadiyah, the Pematang Siantar PCNU often holds meetings and discussions. This is done to help the public understand that NU and Muhammadiyah may have differences, but it must be remembered that NU and Muhammadiyah are part of the same entity, namely Islam.

b. The Substance of Multicultural Preaching

Multicultural da'wah is composed of two key concepts: da'wah and multiculturalism. Da'wah refers to the act of inviting others to goodness, while multiculturalism emphasizes the importance of cultural diversity. For these processes to be effective, individuals must have an inner desire to engage their reasoning, intellect, and emotions in order to strive toward a better, more Islamic state.³⁰ The term "multiculturalism" derives from "multi," meaning many or diverse, and "culture," which means culture, thus signifying cultural diversity.

Indonesia is home to a rich tapestry of ethnicities spread throughout the Republic. The society is incredibly diverse, as evidenced by the multitude of tribes that inhabit the country. Indonesia is composed of various groups that differ in ethnicity, culture, tribe, religion, and language. This diversity presents a unique challenge for preachers, who must formulate messages that are considerate of the cultural contexts of their audience, or *mad'u*. It is important for them to employ methods and media that align with the societal cultural standards. The practice of inclusive multicultural preaching has a positive effect in reducing

²⁹ (Salsabia, 2024)

³⁰ Wahyu Budiantoro and Khafidhoh Dwi Saputri, "Pengembangan Dakwah Multikultural Di Era Digital," *ICODEV: Indonesian Community Development Journal* 2, no. 1 (2021): 13–22, <https://doi.org/10.24090/icodev.v2i1.5294>.

discrimination and misunderstandings between different groups.³¹ By adopting an approach rooted in mutual respect and appreciation for diversity, preaching can help change negative perceptions of other groups. This is particularly important in Indonesia, where numerous communities coexist with different backgrounds. Furthermore, adaptive preaching that emphasizes interfaith dialogue has the potential to enhance social relations and foster a deeper understanding within the community. Such efforts can help mitigate tensions and create a more harmonious environment amidst diversity, ultimately promoting values of equality and humanity in the appreciation of religious and cultural differences.³²

In the context of multicultural da'wah, Masdar Hilmy asserts that cultural diversity is an inevitable aspect of social reality. However, this diversity does not always result in positive acceptance. Multicultural da'wah builds upon the classical view of cultural da'wah, which acknowledges the validity of cultural harmony and local wisdom that align with the principles of monotheism. The key difference is that multicultural da'wah extends this perspective by broadening its cultural scope and intelligence.³³ Conceptually, multiculturalism encompasses two interrelated views. First, it refers to the condition of cultural diversity or cultural pluralism within a society, which is expected to foster an attitude of tolerance. Second, multiculturalism involves a set of policies implemented by the central government to ensure that all cultural groups are acknowledged and respected. This approach is justified, as every ethnic group or tribe contributes to the formation and development of a nation. Multicultural da'wah can be understood as a recognition of the cultural diversity that Muslims appreciate.³⁴

According to K.H. A. Mustofa Bisri, Islamic preaching with a multicultural framework aims to uplift humanity. Culture itself is a pattern of values, beliefs, behaviors, and traditions shared by a specific group or society. It encompasses all aspects of human life, including language, religion, arts, music, food, clothing, and more. This implies that da'wah must effectively convey cultural diversity and promote it as a *maqāṣid al-sharīah* (Islamic goal) for the entire community. In this context, multicultural da'wah is assessed in terms of its philosophical and axiological resilience.³⁵

This study demonstrates that the substance of multicultural da'wah must always be upheld to achieve unity within the community, even if they differ in their views. Through the da'wah of the Pematang Siantar PCNU, a change in the community's climate is evident. With PCNU Pematang Siantar frequently meeting with Muhammadiyah and maintaining cooperation with non-Muslims, it has become an example to the community that differences are not an obstacle to living together, but rather a blessing to be appreciated. In its da'wah, PCNU Pematang Siantar consistently emphasizes that differences are a blessing, and PCNU also advocates for religious moderation, as advocated by the government. Furthermore, PCNU does not forbid existing cultures, but rather adopts them into Islamic values.

³¹ Asih Riyanti and Neni Novitasari, "Pendidikan Multikultural Berbasis Kearifan Lokal Bagi Siswa Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Adat Dan Budaya Indonesia* 3, no. 1 (2021): 29–35, <https://doi.org/10.23887/jabi.v3i1.37780>.

³² (Pamungkas, 2025)

³³ Sima Nahara and Ahmad Nurcholis, "Konstruksi Dakwah Multikultural Kiai Lokal Era Modern (Studi Kasus Kiai Di Tuban)," *Meyara: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Dakwah* 2, no. 2 (2021): 41–54.

³⁴ Hamdani Khaerul Fikri, "Dakwah Pada Masyarakat Multikultural," *Mudabbir: Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 4, no. 2 (2023): 129–41, <https://doi.org/10.20414/mudabbir.v4i2.9208>.

³⁵ (Helndra, 2023)

c. Development of Multicultural Preaching in the Digital Era

The Islamic religion was revealed by Allah to humanity as a sharia that is a mercy for all the worlds. Because of its nature of providing mercy for the entire universe, Islam is universal in nature and practice. According to Jailani, this universality of Islamic teachings has enabled its teachings to spread widely and be accepted throughout the world, including Indonesia.³⁶

The development of communication technology has transformed traditional preaching patterns into digital preaching, where religious messages are delivered through digital platforms such as social media, websites, and instant messaging applications. Digital preaching allows for a broader and faster dissemination of Islamic values, but also presents challenges such as the dissemination of inaccurate information and the potential for bias in the interpretation of religious teachings. In this context, multicultural preaching through digital platforms is crucial to ensure that religious messages are delivered contextually and respect the cultural diversity of society.³⁷

In the propagation of Islamic da'wah, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) must be the primary reference. Fakhruddin al-Razi argued that the Prophet was sent as a mercy for both the world and religion. His mercy towards religion was necessary at a time when humanity was steeped in ignorance and error, and the People of the Book were confused about religious matters. Therefore, Allah sent Muhammad as a guide. His mercy for the world encouraged people who were accustomed to prohibitions to abandon those restrictions. Building a multicultural da'wah to create peace must be founded on the principles of love, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. As Fethullah Gülen stated, da'wah cannot rely solely on intellectualism; it must also be rooted in action. This movement should adapt to the cultural, intellectual, economic, and social conditions of a region. In Indonesia, many Islamic outreach movements prioritize love, such as the Gusdurian movement. For example, Gusdurian Surabaya consistently emphasizes preaching peace, tolerance, and harmony among religious communities. On an international scale, the implementation of multicultural outreach gained momentum when Gus Yahya Cholil Tsafiq delivered a speech to a congregation in Yemen regarding the international issue of Palestine versus Israel. An excerpt from his speech states: *"Let me say something that everyone knows but, for some reason, is reluctant to remember, let alone implement. Justice is not only about demanding but also about giving. Therefore, justice cannot be realized without compassion. Those who do not extend compassion cannot possibly offer justice. This is the spirit of religion. This is the spirit of faith."* His speech utilized principles of storytelling, advice, and love. Consequently, the Islamic values of mercy can be applied universally as guidelines for peace. The Qur'an teaches about peace in Chapter 36, Verse 58: *"Peace! Such is the greeting of your Most Merciful Lord to those who love peace."* Furthermore, in Chapter 7, Verse 199, it advises: *"Grant forgiveness, guide the people toward agreement (peace), and do not act foolishly (respond to violence with violence)."*

Preaching must foster human sensitivity, not be radical and confrontational. Sensitivity here means fostering a sense of togetherness in the effort to achieve the common good of all humanity. Regardless of ethnicity, race, and religion, every individual is bound by their human rights. In Indonesia, in particular, a figure like Habib Husein Jafar can serve as an example of multicultural preaching practices. The YouTube platform has become a digital platform for

³⁶ Budiantoro and Saputri, "Pengembangan Dakwah Multikultural Di Era Digital."

³⁷ Fauzan Delasta Bramantyo, "Strategi Dakwah Multikultural Di Era Digital: Studi Kualitatif Terhadap Komunitas Yuk Ngaji Makassar Sebagai Ruang Inklusif Pembinaan Keislaman" 5 (2025): 7343-52.

Habib Husein Jafar's preaching. He uses dialogue and question-and-answer sessions, much like the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did when preaching to people of different religions, alongside the Buddhist figure, Monk Zhuan Ziu. The video has received 9,500 likes. There were 1,400 comments from netizens (from various cultures and religions). The "Noicel" account itself has been subscribed to 58,900 times. Habib Husein Jafar's preaching transmission in this context is very effective in conveying humanitarian discourse in interfaith and intercultural relations. As Allah says in Surah al-Hujurat verse 13, *"We made mankind into tribes and nations that they may know one another"*.

It is important to understand that to create a way of life that accepts and respects multiculturalism in the context of everyday life, such multicultural living must be based on a sincere and genuine attitude as a genuine defense of the unity of the people. A multiculturally conscious society will not be realized if the components of communal living are not properly upheld. Civil society requires individuals who sincerely and wholeheartedly bind their souls to communal living. Such souls will pay attention to and support goodness and demand that humans always live together.³⁸

Thus, multicultural da'wah is a collective effort to maintain and foster universal humanitarian values. This sensitivity to humanity is one indicator of Islam, a mercy for all the worlds. Therefore, Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always commanded humanity to live in harmony (social piety), not just ritual piety.

From the findings of this study, it can be seen that religious organizations significantly influence society in their actions and behavior in daily life. The examples set by religious organization leaders serve as a model for laypeople in their religion. This is because they value their leaders as possessing greater knowledge than themselves. The positive example and role model of the Pematang Siantar Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PCNU) has proven to be more accepting of differences. Furthermore, in conveying da'wah, religious organizations should employ wisdom and gentleness, and be able to adopt existing cultural practices. Because each region certainly has its own culture and customs, therefore Islam must be able to adopt this culture so that it is accepted by the wider community.

D. CONCLUSION

The Nahdlatul Ulama Branch (PCNU) of Pematang Siantar is a religious organization that plays a strategic role in fostering religious and social life within a multicultural society. The profile of PCNU Pematang Siantar shows that this organization operates not only as a religious forum but also as a pioneer in promoting values of religious moderation, tolerance, and strengthening social ties among various religious communities in Pematang Siantar. Its active involvement in a range of socio-religious activities establishes its importance as a vital component of life in a pluralistic urban community. In terms of da'wah management, the PCNU in Pematang Siantar has shown maturity in systematically and sustainably managing its da'wah initiatives. This is reflected in various internal organizational strengthening programs, such as the NU Cadre Education Program (PKPNU), which aims to produce cadres with strong religious competencies who can become agents of change in spreading peaceful Islamic da'wah that is adaptable to the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity in Pematang Siantar.

³⁸ Agus Riyadi and Asep Suraya Maulana, "Dakwah Bi Al-Hikmah Dalam Upaya Membangun Kesadaran Masyarakat Multikultural (Studi Terhadap Dakwah Nabi Muhammad)," *The Proceeding of ICRCs*, 2022, 120–48.

Additionally, the PCNU actively fosters synergistic relationships with local government bodies and various community elements to strengthen social harmony. To ensure the success of multicultural da'wah, the PCNU Pematang Siantar has implemented various contextual and responsive models that address societal conditions. Some of these da'wah models include cultural engagement through *Safari Ramadan* activities, community-based da'wah efforts, and youth capacity-building initiatives through its affiliated organizations. These models effectively convey the messages of moderate *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* ideology and serve to build social solidarity among different groups, which is essential in the context of a multicultural society like Pematang Siantar. Overall, the PCNU Pematang Siantar has successfully positioned itself as an inclusive, modern, and progressive Islamic organization. With a structured da'wah management strategy, a sustainable cadre development program, and adaptable da'wah models, the PCNU Pematang Siantar has developed a harmonious multicultural da'wah practice relevant to contemporary society's needs. This success illustrates that da'wah, rooted in traditional values yet open to change, can be a powerful force for maintaining social cohesion and fostering an Islamic civilization that is *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (a blessing for the universe) at the local level.

Ultimately, this research is not without its limitations and requires further refinement. Future studies are recommended to explore the da'wah methods employed by PCNU Pematang Siantar, possibly by comparing them with those of other religious organizations, such as Muhammadiyah.

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